

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: MacGillivray's Warbler
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
1 adult female or young male
3. Parish: Cameron

Specific Locality: Peveto Woods BRAS Sanctuary

4. Date(s) when observed: 21 Nov. 2021

5. Time(s) of day when observed: about 1 p.m.

6. Reporting observer and city/state address

Reporting observer: Paul E. Conover
City: Lafayette
State: LA

7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s):

8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): That is the question. Is this the same bird seen by Lane in October? Was the same or a different bird seen later in October by Huner? By me in November? And now over several weeks in April? The habitat is certainly thick enough to have hidden it, and few observers have thoroughly worked this site over the winter.

9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light):
Sunny.

10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss 10s

11. Distance to bird(s): About 10 feet

12. Duration of observation: Maybe 2 minutes with about 15 seconds of viewing of parts of bird.

13. Habitat: Thick tangle of brush including blackberry and baccharis, woven through a tangle of hurricane-downed branches.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):

I was slowly following a small flock of warblers including a Nashville and the birds got ahead of me. As I turned the trail I flushed a warbler that was green above and bright yellow beneath. I saw the bird as it crossed the trail and dropped into thick growth on the other side of the trail. I ran through similar expected species including the Nashville seen earlier and Common Yellowthroat, but neither matched the color or pattern of this bird. I felt it was more similar to Kentucky Warbler. I considered that MacGillivray's was a decent possibility and stayed with it. I watched and hoped the bird would forage into the open but it didn't. I waited for about five minutes then walked a short distance away. When I returned, I surprised the bird again and it dropped into thick vines again. I watched and saw movement through fallen branches and tried to focus with camera, but the branches made focusing difficult. I switched to binoculars and was

able to see parts of the bird off and on again, notably the flanks and tail section. I lost it for a few seconds, then saw movement a bit closer to me and shifted focus. At that point the head of the bird came into the open and I clearly saw the eye arcs of the bird. The bird went dark again and I thought it would keep moving closer, but I never even saw another movement again despite staying in place for many minutes and repeatedly visiting the vine tangle area throughout the rest of my stay.

15. Description:

Taken from my eBird list of that day:

“No photos. Bright yellow below, greenish above, gray head with wide distinct bright white eye arcs above and below eyes. Each arc covered about 45 degrees of circumference of eye. Skulking in thick brush nw of booth with visitor log. Seen twice, once in flight across trail, later about 20 feet down trail. Got good diagnostic look through binos but couldn't focus through brush fast enough with camera.”

And from my Labird post that day:

“As I was following the Nashville, I flushed a green-and-yellow warbler across a trail into thick brush that had potential for an "Oporornis," but the brush was incredibly tangled and dense. I went back later and it kicked up again, and after several minutes of seeing movement through tangled sticks it popped into the open and looked at me and I saw that it was a MacGillivray's Warbler. Then it ducked back in and I never saw it again or got photos. The late date has me hoping it's going to stick around and that someone will get a photo. The Lane/Remsen MacGillivray's was over a month ago, and even though this species can skulk I find it doubtful that this is the same bird and that it's eluded birders for that long.”

16. Voice: Not noted.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

Solid yellow underparts eliminate many other warblers including Common Yellowthroat and Nashville. Kentucky by face pattern. Mourning closest contender, but eye arcs in Mourning much thinner, generally reach from eyeline to eyeline.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): None.

19. Previous experience with this species: I have seen this species many times out west, most recently in summer 2021.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

I've studied this species pretty well over the years, especially vs. Mourning.

21. This description is written from:

22. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

Yes. However, without photos, I would well understand skepticism.

23. Date: 21 Nov 2021/11 April 2022

